

MARCH 2005

# Facets

F O R W O M E N

A conversation with  
**Mindy Cook,**  
a Soldier's Wife

**Pearls of Wisdom**

**Table Full of  
Condiments**

**Guard Your  
Identity**

**From the Bad Guys**



# Notes from the newsroom



By Frances Wilke,  
*Facets Editor*

**M**arch Facets has turned into a mosaic of topics. Like a wild color bouquet of flowers I wanted to shake winters chill for our readers.

Meet Mindy Cook, teacher, mother, neighbor, and wife of Chad Cook who is currently serving in Afghanistan. The Tribune covered Chad's send off and stressful moments in November with the Gilbert football in team. Unfortunately, nothing was written on how Mindy has handled the ordeal. See how she is coping with the war.

As volunteer National Guard members finish their duty, I can't

help but wonder who will replace them. As a mother of a teenager, it is never far from my mind.

On the topic of soldiers, if you are interested in getting into shape, check out Debra Atkinson's column, Bridal Boot camp.

Booknotes by Janet Klaas, must be noted as the most favorite column in Facets. Readers call at home and tell me so. This month she is bringing us a real musical collection of good reads.

Identity theft has been in the news lately with good reason, it is a frightful thing if it happens to you. Here are some tips to protect your most important possession, your name.

Speaking of precious, the pearl necklace given to me by my grand-

mother is my favorite piece of jewelry. Nowadays the choice in pearls is extensive and Gary Youngberg tells us why.

Food Bites for March started me in the direction of St. Patrick's Day and the thought of corned beef left me cold, but gazing in my fridge for inspiration, I thought about my condiment collection. Yes, I have hot stuff to share today.

And lastly Heidi Marttila-Losure, a young woman who is wise beyond her years has some good ideas about being young and at home in Iowa. Perhaps some readers could make copies and hand them out at Legislature. I knew I had a good reason for naming her column Hue and Cry.

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Facet > 1. One of the flat surfaces cut on a gemstone.

2. The particular angle from which something is considered.

FACETS IS A SUPPLEMENT TO THE TRIBUNE

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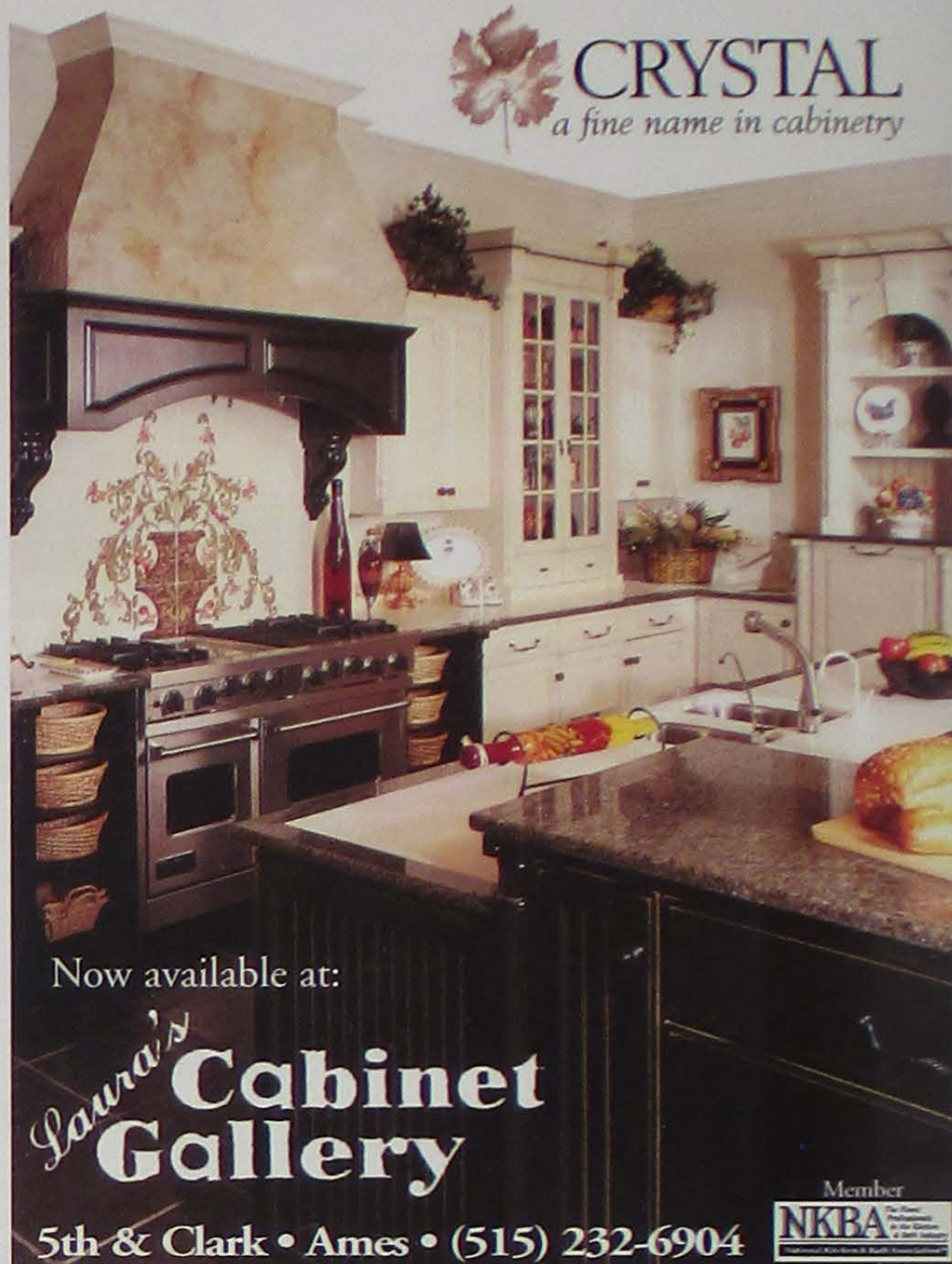
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# Mother & Child

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By Malisa Rader

**Y**ou would think that with both of my children being born in March it would be one of my favorite months. The truth is that this is the month I dread the most for one simple reason...birthday parties. The discussions on plans for the celebration begin immediately following the December holidays. Over the years I have tried several strategies to curb the chaos that comes with young children's birthday parties – parents attending with the children, holding the party at a location other than our home, and even combining their parties together in order to concentrate the craziness. I've also wondered if I could convince my children that birthdays come only every other year. Sounded good to me!

It has taken me a while to realize that maybe it is time for me to stop fighting the inevitable and embrace the reality. Raising children is often going to be messy and demanding. I will not always feel in control and prepared. There may even be times when I feel like a failure. As parents, we need to give ourselves a break and accept the fact that we are doing our best to make good decisions and juggle priorities. This may mean rethinking what it means to be a "good" parent.

Instead of always feeling inadequate because the laundry didn't get done or the dust bunnies under your bed are multiplying, try looking at what successes you had. Some days my house may look terrific. Some days my family may have enjoyed a relaxed evening meal together. Some days I can simply take pleasure that I happily ended my daughter's day with a chapter from the latest Junie B. Jones book. It's important for me as a parent to keep in perspective that only rarely is everything wonderful at the same time.

Parenting is a mix of joy and frustration; and that combination often brings disorder. Some years we are strong enough to say yes to parties and disorder. Some years we can jump into the chaos of balloons, spilled ice cream, and pin the tail on the crazy parent. Some years we need to enjoy a small family dinner and experience a quieter joy.

We all know that raising children takes time and energy. Don't let that go to waste on guilt over the small things. If we learn to accept that some mayhem is a part of raising children, we'll be better able to roll with the punches. Our children and our own lives will benefit from the change in attitude. ♦

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# Guard yourself against...

By Amy Juhnke

Director of Marketing & Public Relations  
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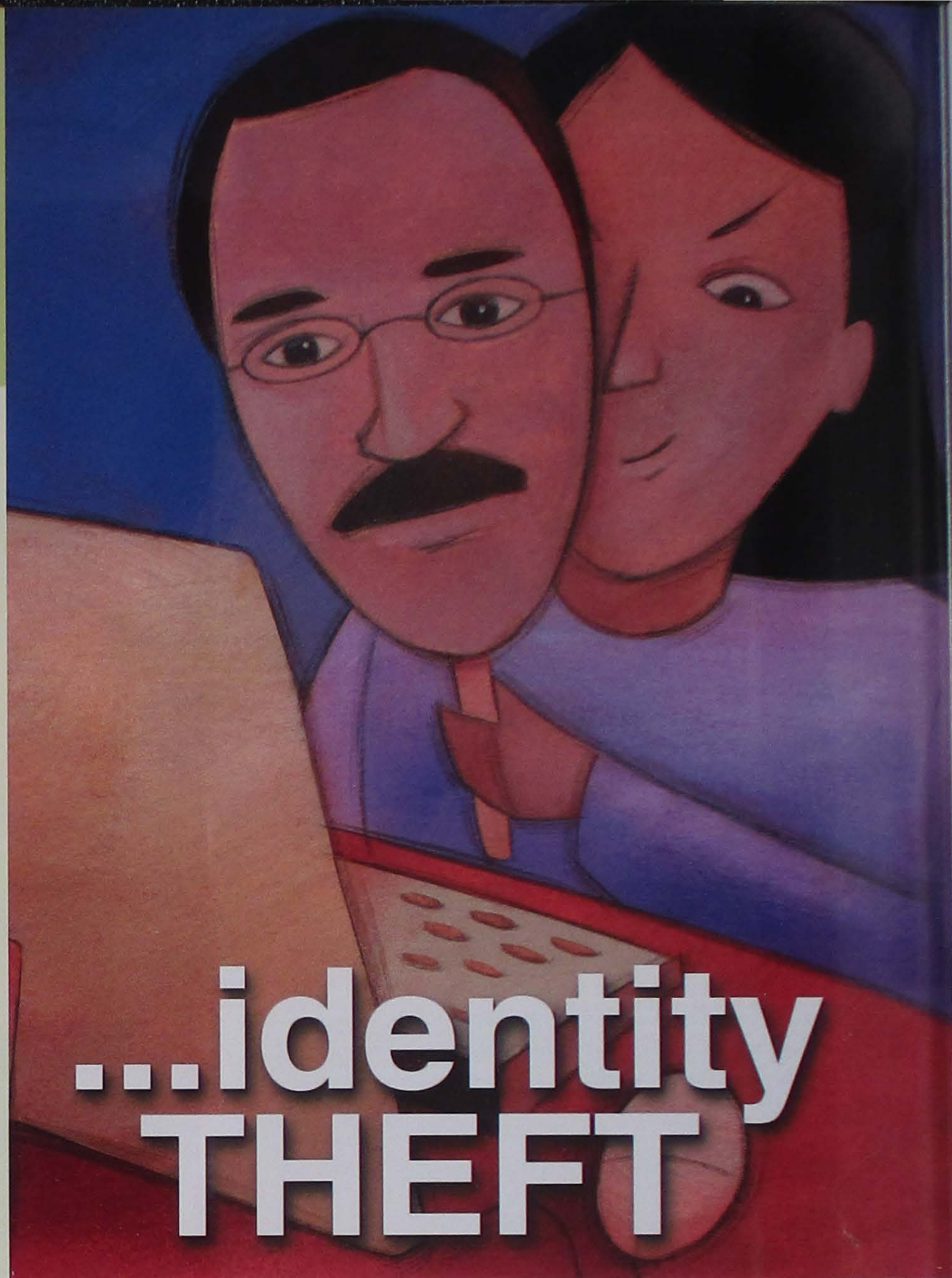
Identity theft is a modern version of burglary — a thief uses your personal information to gain access to your finances and commits fraud. Thieves use information such as your social security number, credit information, and other data to set up new credit cards or lines of credit under your name, and can even get a driver's license in your name, or other forms of official identification. Victims of identity theft usually find out about the crime much too late, and end up spending incredible amounts of time and money to clean up their credit history.

## Following are some tips for preventing identity theft:

- Verify the credentials of anyone asking you for personal financial information. If someone emails you or calls and asks for this type of information, hang up and call the organization the caller claimed to represent.
- When it is an option, use an alternate identification number to your social security number. For example, do not put your social security number on your driver's license.
- Check your credit report at least once a year. (See the end of this article for credit bureau information.) If any items with personal information are stolen from you, check your credit report more often.
- Check all bills, especially credit card bills, carefully for any unusual charges.
- Shred personal documents such as account statements, credit card applications, and any other documents with personal financial information.
- Do not put outgoing mail in your home mailbox that contains personal financial information. This is the easiest place a thief can gain access to your identity.

## If you believe you are a victim of identity theft:

- Contact all three credit bureaus and ask them to place a fraud alert on your file (see the end of this article for credit bureau information.) Ask for a copy of your credit report.



# ...identity THEFT

- File a report with your local police and/or in the town where the fraud took place. Save a copy of the police report in your files.
- File a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) via the Identity Theft Hotline (1-877-IDTHEFT.)
- Contact any creditors of fraudulent accounts via phone and follow up in writing, keeping copies for your files. Close any suspicious accounts and change passwords if applicable.
- Ask creditors if they will accept the FTC's ID Theft Affidavit. The affidavit is available by calling the hotline above or online at [www.consumer.consumer.gov/idtheft](http://www.consumer.consumer.gov/idtheft). This form can be used to notify several companies simultaneously.
- Check with the Social Security Administration to verify the security of your

social security number. You can call 800-772-1213 to check your social security statement for accurate reporting of earnings information.

## The three major credit bureaus include:

- Experien (888-397-8742) [www.experian.com](http://www.experian.com)
- Equifax (800-685-1111) [www.equifax.com](http://www.equifax.com)
- TransUnion (800-916-8800) [www.transunion.com](http://www.transunion.com)

As a result of the federal FACT Act, Iowa residents are entitled to one free copy of their credit report each year, from each of the three credit bureaus. You can begin requesting your free credit reports on March 1, 2005 at [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com). ♦



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# WHAT DO WE READ NEXT



## The interconnection of music, literature, and film

By Janet E. Klaas

Last year both of my book groups picked the same book, *Bel Canto*, to read. It was, for me — and for everyone else, for that matter — an amazingly satisfying read.

Basing her story on an incident that took place in Lima, Peru, author Ann Patchett constructed an elegant novel of ideas. In the real-world story, a terrorist group known as Tupac Amaru, in December 1996 commandeered a dinner party of 450 people at the Japanese embassy. The president of Peru at that time was of Japanese descent; but, to the dismay of the party crashers, was not present that night. By the end of a week, the terrorists had released all but 74 of the hostages. The terrorists, it turned out, were not very terrifying; and their goal was to force the president to release some 400 political prisoners from Peru's notorious high-altitude prisons. The

group seemed to be willing to wait for as long as it took for their demands to be met. That time stretched into three months; no hostages were hurt; and reports were that — like other long-term hostage situations — a certain rapport evolved between the hostages and their captors. They played chess, watched television, had conversations together. Finally, though, Peru's military tunneled into the compound, shot all the Tupac Amaru, and freed the hostages—end of the real-life story.

In her novel, Patchett uses the basic elements of the news story but creates the characters of Roxanne Coss, a beautiful American opera star (whom one reviewer called “a dead ringer for Rene Fleming”); Katsumi Hosokowa, a Japanese business mogul and opera lover; and Gen Wannabe, Hosokowa's interpreter. These characters clearly center the book on the

theme of music's ability to communicate across cultural and language differences and to speak to the heart.

This wonderful book made me think of the interconnection of music, literature, and film (surely, this novel would make a beautiful movie). Once I started looking, the choices for this column were overwhelming. So, here are but a few:

• **The Cello Player, Michael Kruger, 2000 (English translation, 2004).**

The narrator of this tale of love and loss is a middle-aged composer of avant-garde music who makes a living writing jingles for television. He takes into his household a young cello player, who may or may not be his daughter, when she moves from Budapest to Munich to study at the music conservatory. Her presence reminds him of an earlier time and place when life was about his art and not his

livelihood.

• **The Lantern Bears, Ronald Frame, 1999.** This winner of the 2000 Saltier Award (The Scottish Book of the Year), describes the power of music and the sometimes troubled life of its servants. Neil Pritchard is commissioned by a publisher to write the definitive biography of a famous Scottish composer, Euan Bone, who died, “much too young,” in 1963. Little did the publisher know that Pritchard had a long-ago connection to the composer. In 1962, as a 14-year-old, Neil Pritchard had been the musical muse for Bone's last composition.

• **The Piano Tuner, Daniel Mason, 2002.** In 1866, a shy piano tuner named Edgar Drake received an unusual commission from the British War Office to travel to the remote jungles of northeast Burma to repair a rare piano



belonging to an eccentric army surgeon who had become indispensable to the British Empire's ambitions in the region. This wonderful first novel weaves psychology, politics, medicine, and music theory into a riveting and profound story.

• **Aria, Susan Segal, 2001.** When her husband and two small children are killed in a sailing accident, Eve Miller, the sole survivor and the narrator of Segal's first novel, is taken in by Isabel Stein, an aging opera diva, who meets Eve in the hospital where she is taken after the accident. She is given living quarters with Isabel and her husband, Leo. Though Eve tries to disengage from life, she finds that her growing fascination with Isabel and with opera itself is helping her recover. This novel also is a meditation on the lure and luridness of fame in a media-soaked culture — the details of which are pure operatic tragedy.

• **Hedwig and Berti, Frieda Arkin, 2005.** Arkin's first novel, *The Dorp*, was published in 1969. In between that time and now, she was occupied with raising a family, writing articles, short stories, and cookbooks. Arkin attended Julliard School of Music and has a master's degree in anthropology from Columbia University. After a 35-year hiatus from long fiction, her new work is a darkly humorous saga of the unlikely marriage of a grandly Teutonic woman, Hedwig Kessler, and her diminutive cousin, Berti. They are two upper-class German Jews forced to leave their homeland during the Nazi regime. Hedwig and Berti first live in London, then in New York City, and finally in a university town in Kansas (Lawrence?). In London, Hedwig gives birth to Gerda

who shows an early genius for the piano. Little grand-piano icons separate the short sections of this novel that is really about people's struggle to adapt to different cultures.

• **Hilary and Jackie (originally titled, *A Genius in the Family*), Jackie du Pre and Piers du Pre, 1997.** This memoir written by the sister and brother of famed cellist Jacqueline du Pre was the basis of the film "Hilary and Jackie." At the time, both the film and the book created quite a stir within the musical community. Jacqueline was a prodigy who took up the cello at the age of 5 and had her professional debut at 16. But 10 years later she stopped playing when multiple sclerosis removed the feeling in her hands just before a concert. She lived for 14 more years. Her remarkable playing is still remembered and documented on recordings. The controversy about the book and the film stemmed from their revelations about Jacqueline du Pre's private life, her marriage to conductor Daniel Barenboim, her compulsions, and the price exacted by her talent on her whole family.

• **Out of Tune; David Helfgott and the Myth of Shine, Margaret Helfgott (with Tom Gross), 1998.** Here is another memoir written by the sibling of a performer made famous by a film. Pianist David Helfgott was a brilliant piano prodigy whose budding career was waylaid by a devastating mental illness. The film portrayed David and Margaret's father, Peter Helfgott, as a demanding taskmaster who drove his young son to madness. Margaret Helfgott, a pianist herself, sets the record straight in this biography of her troubled brother.

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# ONE WOMAN'S war

I'm Proud of my  
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WHO'S SERVING IN  
Afghanistan

By Frances Wilke

Between the sendoff and the homecoming parade, soldiers' families are quietly coping with separation caused by war. Unlike World War II, Hollywood has not been creating any morale-boosting films to make Mindy Cook of Gilbert feel better about putting her life on hold while her husband, Chad Cook, helps with rebuilding efforts in Afghanistan.

"It is tough for me when the media only concentrates on how many deaths there are," says Mindy, 33. "Chad tells us about all the rebuilding and changes the country has had since their elections. Women getting to vote was a big deal after what those folks had been through."

Keeping up a positive attitude is important, especially for the couple's two children: Harrison, 9, and Megan, 2, who have been staying in touch with their

father by email and phone calls.

"Dad sent me this beautiful wooden chest and a hat and this, too," says Harrison, holding out an egg carved from lapis lazuli, a semi-precious stone found in Afghanistan.

Support comes from family living in Roland and Ankeny. The Gilbert school community and the Lutheran church have set up a schedule for sending home-cooked meals so Mindy can have more "mommy time," a welcome help for this full-time 4th grade teacher.

"This experience will make us both be better parents and teachers," says Cook. "If he was in Iraq, I would feel differently."

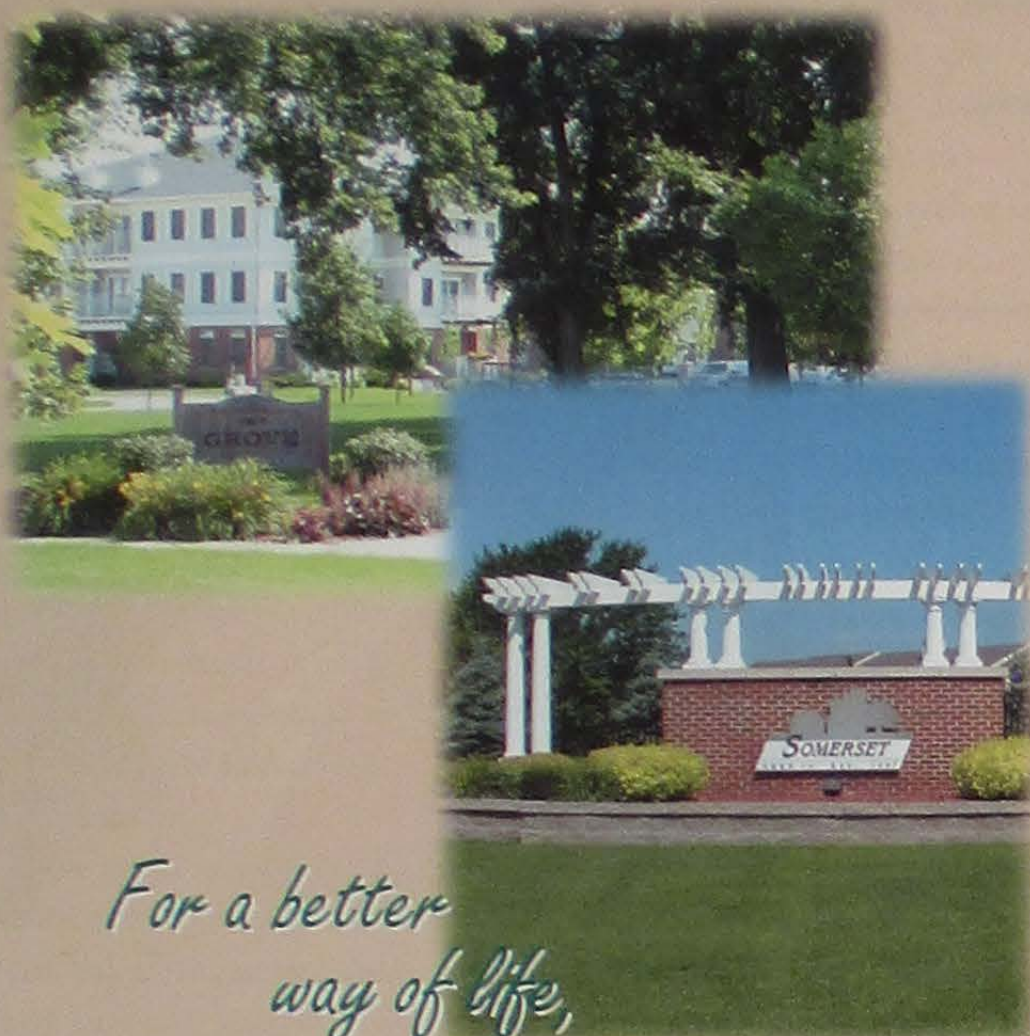
Chad Cook, who left for duty March 7, 2004, expects to return to his job as a teacher and football coach for Gilbert High School sometime in mid June. ♦








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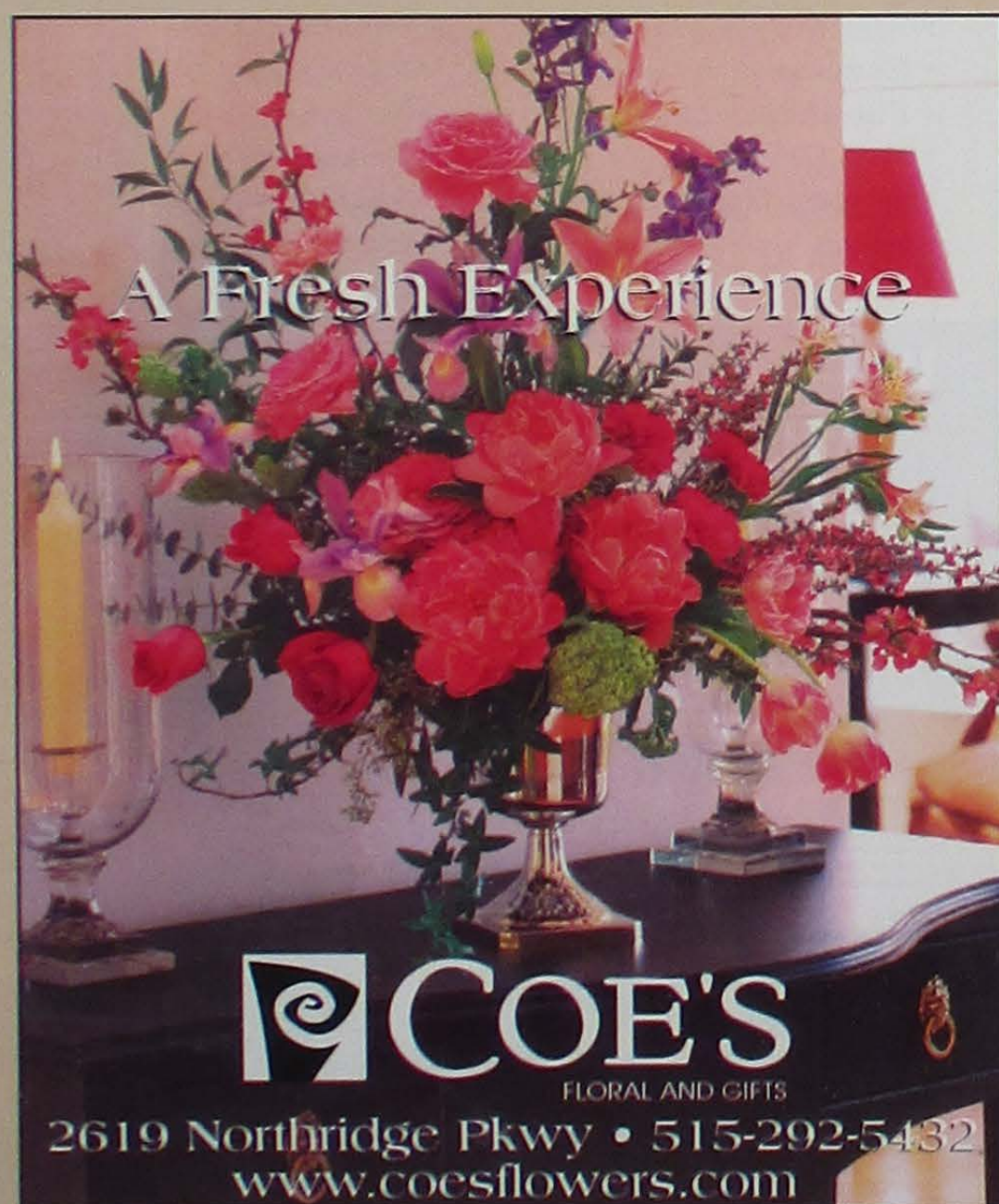


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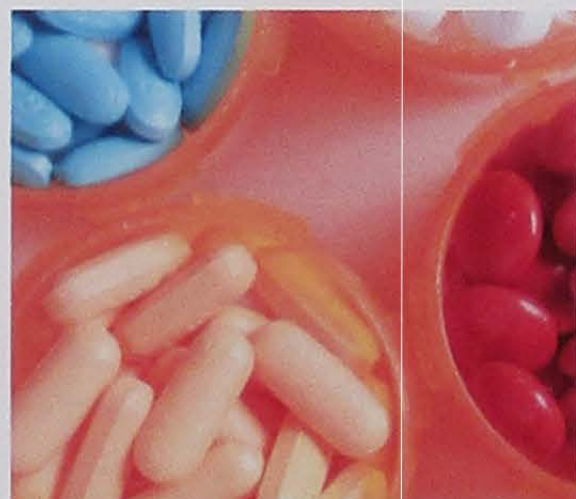
# HAIR today GONE tomorrow

By Charles W. Love M.D.

**T**reatment of excessive facial or body hair is one of the most commonly requested cosmetic procedures in my dermatology clinics. Often, by the time women seek treatment for this embarrassing condition, they have tried everything and have

nearly given up with discouragement.

There are two terms for excess hair growth that have important differences. Hirsutism is most correctly defined as excessive hair growth, in women, in areas that are normally associated with masculine hair growth. It is caused by the presence of



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excess testosterone-like hormones. The most common causes are medical conditions such as polycystic ovarian disease. Steroid abuse by women athletes is another cause.

Hypertrichosis is much more common and is defined as undesirable growth of hair. It can be noted in any location and is a problem for men as well as women. By definition, if you think you have an excess hair problem...then you do! Hypertrichosis is caused by genetic factors, some medical conditions and a few medications.

The most common areas of concern in women are the upper lip, chin, underarms, bikini line and legs. In men the most commonly treated areas are the back, chest and lower neck.

**Now that you know the problem, what are the solutions? There are several things that you can do for yourself:**

1. **Bleach** dark hair to reduce visibility
2. **Shave.** This must be done daily to maintain good results. Contrary to popular wisdom, shaving does not cause hair to become coarse or dark.
3. **Pluck or wax.** This can be irritating but does give a couple of weeks of improvement per session

If you are tired of doing treatments at home, I would recommend a consultation with your medical skin care specialist. He or she can offer additional treatment options and, importantly, evaluate and treat possible underlying medical problems. The two ways to reduce excess hair permanently are electrolysis and laser/IPL treatments.

**Electrolysis** uses an electric current to destroy the hair follicle one follicle at a time. It is time consuming but can give good results when done properly. I always tell people to think of it as a process rather than a procedure because many treatments are needed over a six- to 12-month period to get good results.

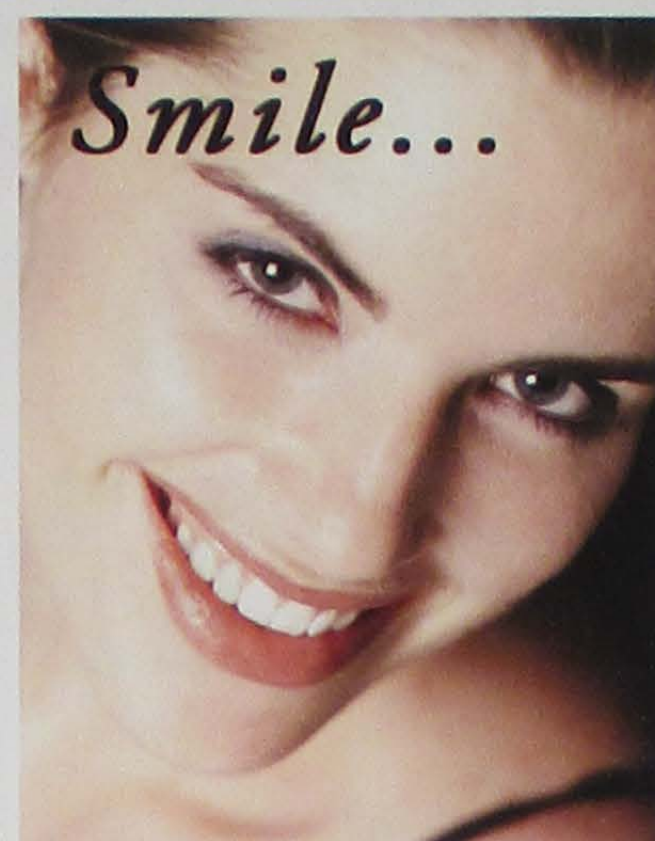
**Laser and IPL** (intense pulsed light) are the newest treatment options for excess hair. Both procedures use an intense pulse of light to super-heat hair follicles leading to their destruction in the treated area. Both treatments work best for dark hair in fair-skinned individuals. IPL will treat a bigger area more quickly than laser. Several treatments are needed to be most effective.

The FDA has mandated the use of the term "permanent hair reduction" for laser and IPL treatments. Contrary to some of the advertising you see and hear, electrolysis, IPL and laser treatment will not make an area of skin free of hair permanently. Even with a perfect result, your skin will generate new hair follicles and you will get new hair growth. This hair growth will be at a lower density than before treatment and can be touched-up with the laser or IPL.

Even though the ideal treatment of excess hair growth has not been invented, there are good treatment options to help you deal with this embarrassing problem. Face your excess hair problems and get some help to smooth your way this new year. ♦

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# Bridal BOOT CAMP



By Debra Atkinson

**F**rom the moment it's determined that he's the one, that "yes" is the only answer, she often spends her time until the inevitable walk down the aisle proving what is already true; she is also the one.

The day is set, the colors decided, the church reserved. The dress is bought. So the backdrop is set. The pressure to be the storybook bride on the cake top begins. And it's contagious! Mothers of the bride, of the groom, maids and matrons of honor and bridesmaids everywhere find themselves concerned with the degree of svelte they'll have the moment "I dos" are declared. Unfortunately, with that mindset the results might not last beyond the reception.

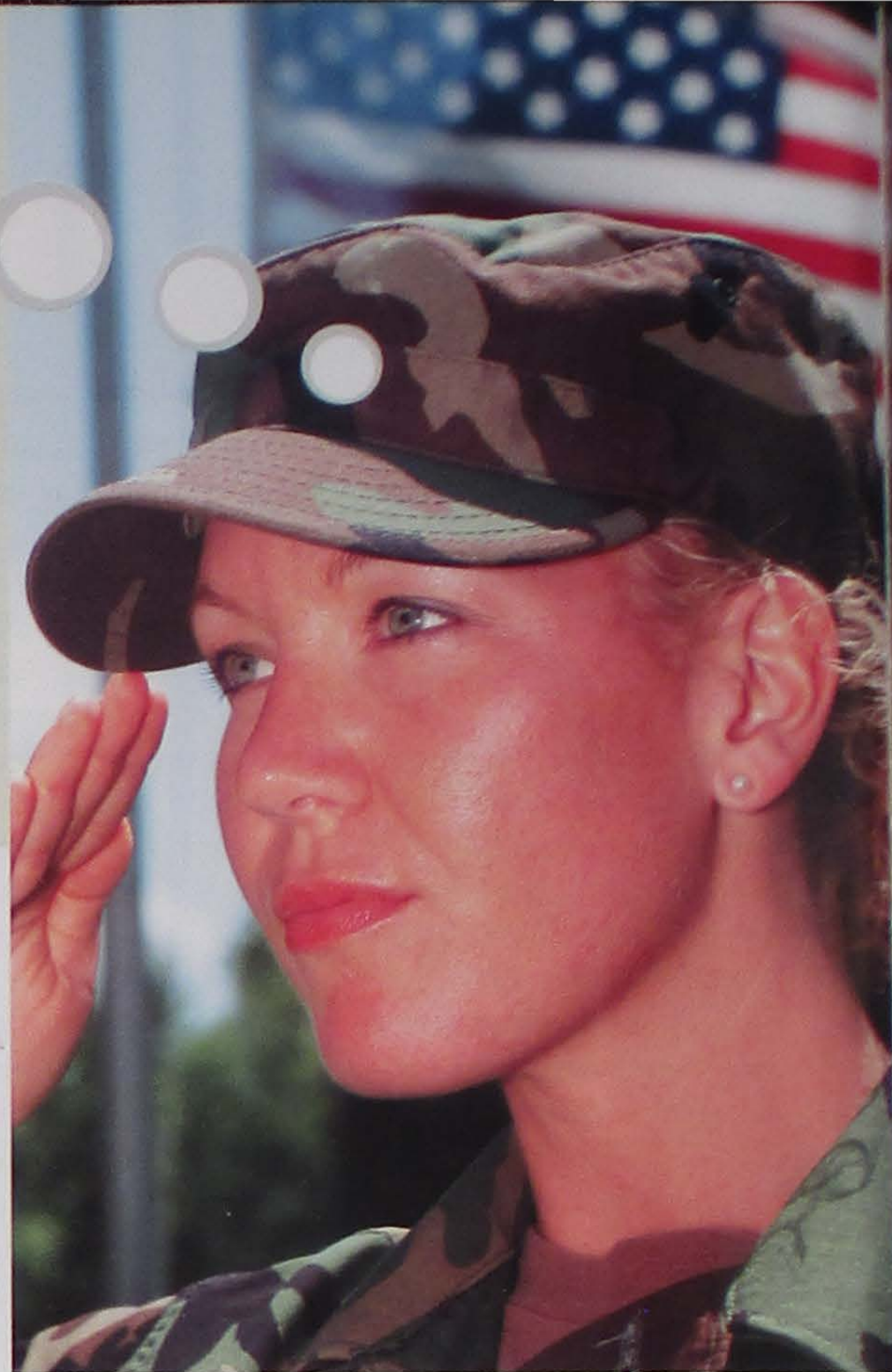
Starving or playing hostage to the treadmill is hardly the way to a glowing complexion or a radiant expression on your face as you smile for the pictures. The short term preparation is as likely to last as long as a courtship focused on a 45-minute ceremony. When the focus becomes a long-term commitment to exercise and good nutrition it's a marriage made in healthy heaven. There are big decisions to be made between cereal bowls or salad plates, it's true, but register this: the plates, the bowls, and the glassware will break and chip. Replacing those is a trip to the mall. Replacing body parts or reworking damage done years later is a bit more invasive!

Timing is everything. Start early and you have the best chance of making your wedding pictures not so dis-

tant memories on your first anniversary. Create lifestyle habits and you may find your anniversaries celebrating a marriage and a body that are better than ever.

Four to six months of a personal exercise program will reap big rewards, but in even as little as eight weeks you can make a significant impact on your body composition with a combination of cardiovascular exercise and resistance training. The right proportion of these exercises for you depends on the decade you're in and your body type. In your 20s a higher percent of your time spent doing cardiovascular activity will pay off. In your 40s, resistance training and stretching should increase. If you are a more muscular body type to begin with, less weight with a few more repetitions might be better for you while a very angular body type may call for a little more weight if you want to have a few curves in the right places. You can't spot reduce, that much is true. However, you can target tone areas of your back, abdominals, and arms with training and dare to bare with confidence.

Ever catch your reflection as you passed by a window or mirror? Immediately you straighten and bring your shoulders back. The trick is to train your muscles to do this automatically. In as little as four weeks, working two to four times a week you can appear longer and leaner (and more confident) by performing pilates and yoga, both very postural based exercises.



## SAMPLE BRIDAL BOOTCAMP

(works for Prom too!)

### Basic Training: 2-3 weeks

- Circuit strength training for all muscle groups will build a foundation for additional definition later.
- Cardiovascular exercise 20-35 minutes three to five times a week. Beginners 20 minutes three times a week, advanced up to 35 minutes up to five days a week with interval training at higher intensity on two or three of those days.

### Strength Training: 3-4 weeks

- Super-setting muscle groups for tone and definition, ie., Bolder Shoulders, Awesome Arms, Leaner Legs, Beautiful Backs
- Cardio exercise continues 20-40 minutes four to six days a week, alternate interval training with short and long days to challenge the body.
- Pilates or Yoga based core and postural work three to four days a week.

### Heavy Combat: two to three weeks

- Split routine: five to six days a week
- Cardiovascular exercise 20-40 minutes four to six times a week, changing modes to challenge the body (cycling, running/walking, elliptical)
- Pilates or Yoga based core and postural work three to four days a week. Full class one or two times a week and recommended exercises two to three times. ♦





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# Pearls



By Gary Youngberg  
Ames Silversmithing

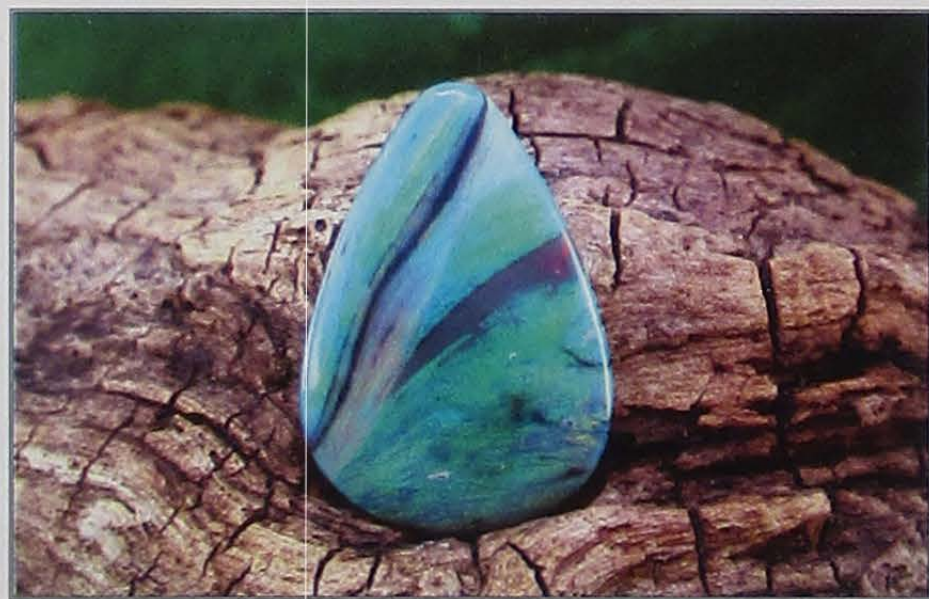
For thousands of years, civilizations have treasured pearls for their mystical and spiritual values. In fact, pearls are perhaps the very first gem to be used as jewelry. Thought to ward off evil spirits and protect those who adorn themselves, pearls at one time were even more valuable than diamonds. The French royalty in Napoleon's time preferred pearls over diamonds and wore them day and night. Pearls were so valuable in ancient times that when Cleopatra gave a banquet for Marc Antony, the pearls she wore were worth nearly 1.9 million ounces of silver!

Pearls come in nearly every size, shape and color, and are, in fact, the mollusk's way to defend itself from a foreign invader. When an irritant such

as a grain of sand makes its way into the mollusk, the mollusk responds by coating the irritant with layer after layer of nacre to make the impediment smooth so as to not irritate the mollusk. Hundreds upon hundreds, if not thousands of layers are needed to form a decent pearl.

There are two classifications of pearls today — cultured and natural. Natural pearls, those that formed in the mollusk by accident, are quite rare and a single pearl of fine quality the size of a pea may cost in excess of \$1,000. Cultured pearls are pearls that have had the nucleus implanted in order to generate a pearl. Typically, the nucleus is much larger than in a natural pearl, so a nice quality cultured pearl can develop in two to three years as opposed to decades for a natural pearl.

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Even within the classification of cultured pearl, there are many different varieties as well as origins. The ability to produce a cultured pearl was developed by Kokichi Mikimoto in 1908. For decades, the name Mikimoto was synonymous with cultured pearls. In fact, for many years after the original development of the cultured pearl, the pearl farms owned by Mikimoto produced nearly 75 percent of the world's cultured pearls.

For many years, Japan was the world's leading producer of cultured pearls, but in recent years, China and the islands of the South Seas have become a substantial factor. Pearls from Japan are primarily white in color, while the cultured pearls from China are available in white, pink, mauve, peach and many other subtle colors in between. The various colors are produced by different mollusks as well as different growing conditions. In addition, these pearls

are often available in not just the traditional round shape, but also in teardrops and egg shapes as well. The pearls from the South Seas also are available in many colors including the widely desired black pearl. Black is somewhat of a misnomer, as the black pearls from Tahiti range from silver to gray, slate to eggplant as well as charcoal, often with many slight greenish or bluish overtones. The Philippines are producing magnificent golden color pearls and the large white pearls from Australia are indeed a sight to see!

There are numerous factors affecting the value of pearls, with size, shape, color, luster and match being the most important. The luster of a pearl is the most important as this is the "glow" one sees when looking at the pearls. Size is a significant factor simply due to the fact that a larger pearl takes longer to grow than a smaller pearl. Shape is important in the pricing of a strand of pearls, too. Perfectly round pearls are not produced as frequently as out-of-round pearls, so it takes much longer to match a number of them up for a well-matched strand. The amount of blemishes on a pearl is also a factor in pricing, but a strand with wonderful luster with a few small blemishes will be a much more attractive strand than perfectly clean pearls with little or no luster.

With the advent of pearls in so many wonderful colors, sizes and shapes, jewelry designers are no longer relegated to producing mundane designs. Funky and daring for some- classic and elegant for others, the look for now is centered on your own personal tastes, but make no mistake, the pearls of today are NOT your mother's strand of pearls. ♦

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# Food BITES

## CONSTANT CONDIMENTS

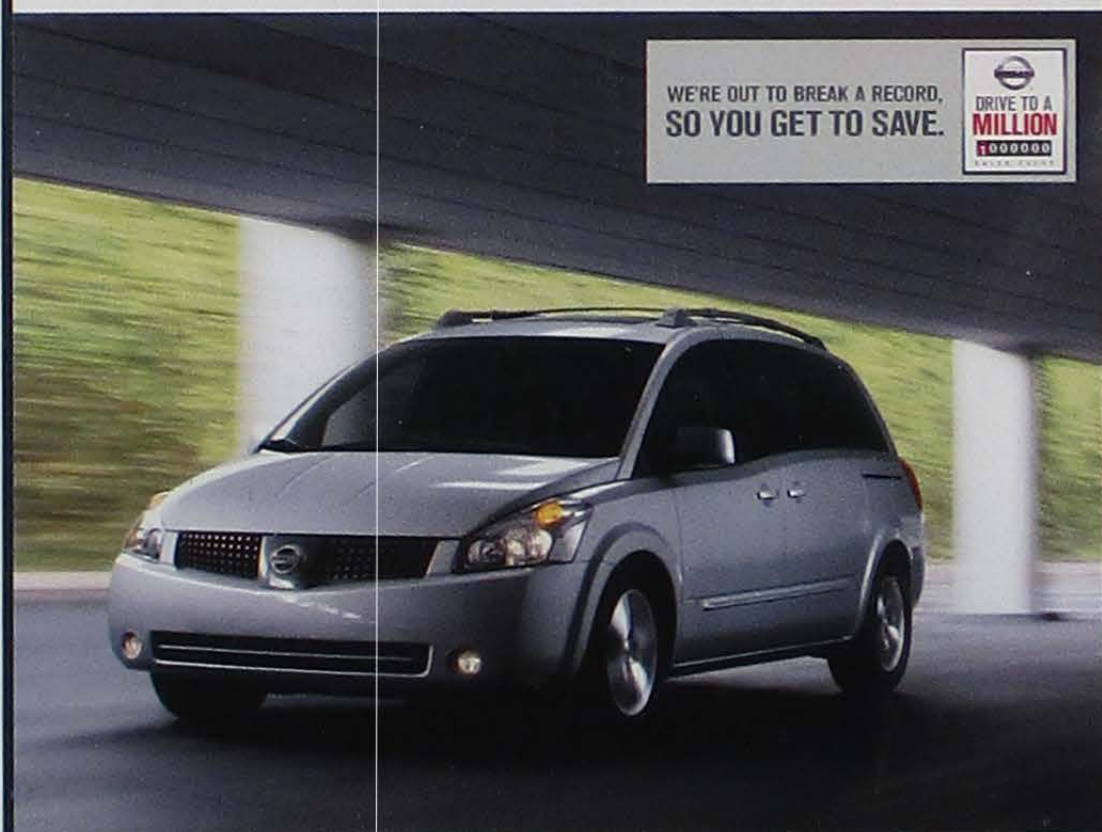
By Frances Wilke

Spring-cleaning has started at my house. This task starts in the kitchen, my fridge to be exact. Which brings me to my little problem, I am addicted to condiments.

I confess to eating artichokes in the spring simply as a vehicle for mayonnaise. And what would a ham and cheese sandwich be without a fancy shmancy mustard? Hardly edible.

I love how a jar can sit on a shelf at the store and call my name. If I could restrain myself,

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I might not have this Imelda-like food fetish but I don't like to miss that easy cooking technique, unscrewing the jar. Besides, these little packaged bundles have come from around the world just to delight and inspire me. Unfortunately, there are 54 jars of inspiration on the icebox door and 37 more waiting in my pantry.

Will it ever stop? I go to one of my regular dealers, I mean purveyors for help.

"If you are counting differ-

ent sour creams, salsas, salad dressings and the like," says Tom Gard, Hy Vee store manager, "we probably have close to a thousand different varieties of condiments."

We lazy cooks should be grateful for choice. This list covers the gamut to include Worcestershire, jams, syrups, mustards, steak sauce, BBQ sauce, ketchup, pickles and piccalilli. Even that jar of fried onions we need for making green bean casserole counts.

So, when you don't want to look at a plain cooked chicken breast staring up from the plate, dream of any country in the world and spoon out the flavors from a jar. It is as easy as that.

Here are some of my favorite brands.

Patak's has a huge assortment catering to Indian and Middle Eastern tastes.

Thai Kitchen is for those who might like to experiment with authentic Thai taste. The peanut sauce comes in original

and spicy, and is especially nice.

For salsa the list is long, but Frontera and Desert Trading Company are sure winners. If you're looking for fresh salsa, Fareway sells a brand called Fiesta Garden Fresh, an Iowa product to be proud of.

Sweet pepper or olive spreads mix nicely with yogurt or sour cream to cover just about anything.

Chilli sauce comes in all varieties. Haven't found one I don't like. ♦

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# hue & cry

Definition: *Any loud clamor or protest intended to incite others to action.*

## Young and at home in Iowa

By Heidi Marttila-Losure

A proposal from Iowa's GOP legislators made headlines across the state at the end of January. In an effort to keep young people from fleeing Iowa as soon as they can scrape together gas money, lawmakers offered to give young people a free ride on tax day. If you stay, you don't pay.

Figuring out why the topic has made headlines isn't difficult.

The statistics clearly show that young people are leaving: More than 9,000 college-educated singles ages 25 to 39 moved into Iowa between 1995 and 2000, but more than twice that number left, according to the 2000 U.S. Census.

People can feel the whoosh as young people hit the road. Community organizations like the Lions Club and volunteer fire stations are having a hard time finding new recruits. As old farmers die, increasingly they are leaving their farms to heirs no longer rooted in Iowa soil. Schools are closing and consolidating as people leave to raise their children elsewhere. And as their children leave the nest, more and more parents wonder how far their future grandchildren will have to travel to get to grandmother's house in Iowa.

Pretty much everyone agrees that something needs to be done. But will cutting taxes prove to be a lure for those under 30?

Well, a lack of state income

taxes has not done much good for my home state of South Dakota.

The Dakotas and Iowa share the bottom three rungs of the young persons' migration rate ladder in the U.S. Census. North Dakota is dead last with a rate of minus 282, Iowa comes in with a minus 220, and South Dakota is slight step up at minus 216. But South Dakota doesn't have income taxes. For anybody. It doesn't look like that's doing much to keep young South Dakotans there or to lure young blood from elsewhere.

The state winning the migration lottery with a rate of positive 282, Nevada, doesn't have state income taxes, either. But second-place Colorado and third-place Georgia do welcome incoming young people with tax forms.

I think in the end, state taxes just don't make much of a difference for young people deciding where to call home.

So what does matter?

In my experience, the young people these lawmakers are trying to attract have one of two different motivations.

Some are like the border-skipping young people dubbed "Generation E" in the European Union. These multilingual folks consider all of Europe their job market, and they'll follow a satisfying job across the continent. And, hopefully, that job will be found not far from the mountains, the sea, a great artistic

community or whatever backdrop they think will make their off-hours more interesting.

There are young people here in the United States who follow much the same pattern, although they skip over state lines instead of national borders to find jobs. They might have grown up in Iowa, for example, but they'll feel just as comfortable taking a job in Seattle or New York as Des Moines — and they might just be lured away from their home state by a mountain backdrop or a vibrant arts scene.

A group hiring for a position in a science department at Iowa State University got a glimpse of Iowa's lack of appeal in this category. When the job candidates asked about what there is to explore in the area, the ISU folks found themselves saying things like "It's only six hours to Chicago" or "You can get to the mountains in a day."

Good jobs are the first step to luring these young people to Iowa. But that's not enough. If you want Generation E workers to stop surfing job search sites in their off hours, Iowa is going to have to find another kind of hook.

But some young people have a different motivation — call them "Generation F." I think there is a small but significant number of young people, some who grew up on or around Iowa's farms, who really want to remain rooted in the state's fertile soil and are eager to find a reason to stay.

They aren't getting much encouragement, however. Tanking rural and farm economies are pushing out vast numbers of residents, and no one else is being allowed in to get a foothold. The capital requirements of farming make it nearly impossible for a young person to find a place in the field. And many of the jobs that have been created in rural Iowa as a result of modern agriculture no American wants to do — busloads of Mexicans are brought in to work in the livestock confinements and slaughterhouses.

The key to getting Generation F to plant themselves in Iowa is to give them a boost in the search for not just a good job but a good living. A few incentives for rural, entrepreneurial young Iowans would go a long way.

And drawing Generation E to Iowa means not just good jobs but a good place to live — someplace that has a few natural areas or some art galleries to explore on days off.

And guess what? State taxes from Iowans under 30 could be used to encourage both these endeavors.

I'm glad lawmakers are talking about keeping young people in Iowa, but I think "stay and don't pay" is the wrong idea. Invest our resources in the right places instead, and we just might find more young people ending up on the Iowa side of the border. ♦



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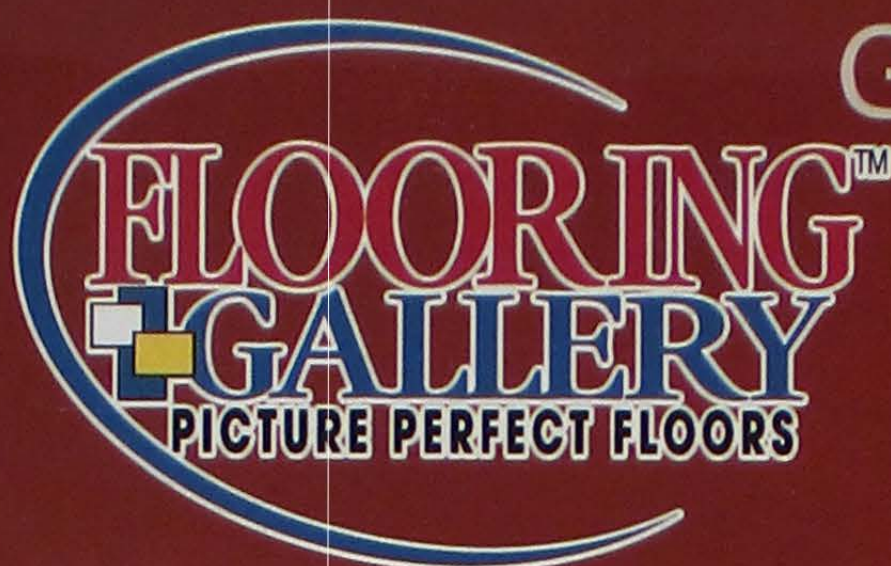
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